

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 14-16, 19, 20, and 30 are pending.

Claims 1-13, 17, 18, and 20-29 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Consequently the rejection of these claims is moot. The rejection of claim 15 is addressed below.

It is noted with appreciation that claims 14, 17, and 20 are deemed to recite allowable subject matter.

Claims 14 has been rewritten in independent form and is believed to be in allowable condition. Claim 16 has been amended to correct the dependency.

Claim 15 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tomiyasu et al., U.S. Publication No. 2002/0119350. Claim 15 has been rewritten in independent form, incorporating the elements of claim 13. Claim 19 has been amended to depend from claim 15.

As amended, claim 15 recites a first seed layer and a second seed layer. The two seed layers exhibit improved crystal orientation and improved crystal particle size in connection with reduction in layer thickness. This characteristic is discussed on paragraphs [0035] to [0058] of the pending application. By comparison, the s/n of the Tomiyasu single-seed layer is poor since the crystallinity and the orientation in the first underlayer is lower quality.

In addition, the first and second seed layers of claim 15 are distinct layers. Hence, claim 15 recites "a first seed layer" and "a second seed layer." It is respectfully submitted that one of ordinary skill in the art would interpret the "single" layer Tomiyasu as comprising two layers, as the Examiner suggests. To emphasize this distinction, claim 30 has been appended, and recites that the first seed layer comprises at least 35 %at. to 70 %at of Cr. The single layer of Tomiyasu is not structurally the same as the multiple sputtered first and second seed layers of the present invention.

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PATENT

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 650-326-2400.

Respectfully submitted,



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